

A MANS WORLD: RITES OF PASSAGE
IN OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	Page 2
Summary	Page 3
Background	Page 4
Role of Control	Page 8
Religious Aspects	Page 9
Experts	Page 11
Case Studies	
... Sambia tribe of Papua New Guinea	Page 12
... Vanuatu Islands, Pentecost Land-Diving	Page 21
... Satere-Mawe Tribe of Brazil and the Bullet-ant Glove	Page 26
Role by International Organizations	Page 30
Canadian Case Study	Page 35
Solutions	Page 40
Conclusion	Page 41
Bibliography	Page 43

Preface

Webster's online dictionary defines 'rites of passage' as - A ritual performed in some cultures at times when an individual changes status (as from adolescence to adulthood)ⁱ.

The main goal of this report is to, in detail; explain how the world perceives rites of passage that men must endure in their lives. It will explain how men, just as much, if not, more than women, have to go through life on a thin rope held up by nothing other than their own will to accept the challenges. This report will be discussing many of the rites of passage that men go through, even ones you would not expect to be classified as a rite of passage.

This report is based on an idea. The idea is, 'why?' Why do men have to put themselves through these usually callous and dangerous rituals to gain acceptance? Prosperity? Love?

To explain how, the report will focus on many case studies in detail, looking at the inside story and history/controversy behind men's rites of passage.

ⁱ "Dictionary - Definition of Rite Of Passage." Webster's Online Dictionary - with Multilingual Thesaurus Translation. Web. 08 Mar. 2011. <[http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definitions/Rite Of Passage?cx=partner-pub-0939450753529744:v0qd01-tdlq&cof=FORID:9&ie=UTF-8&q=Rite Of Passage&sa=Search#922](http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definitions/Rite%20Of%20Passage?cx=partner-pub-0939450753529744:v0qd01-tdlq&cof=FORID:9&ie=UTF-8&q=Rite%20Of%20Passage&sa=Search#922)>.

Summary

This report will contain a large variety of information put together from various internet, book and article sources. The information will be used to create a definition of the issue and those who are affected by it, and participate in it. Much of the information was difficult to obtain and therefore I will look at many case studies in a broader view.

This report includes many sections to focus specifically on the separate components of the assignment. It will comment on the background of the rituals, and how many of them are dangerous to those who participate. The largest resource will most likely be the internet, for it is difficult for me to find a specialist, if there is any. The multiple case studies are from various regions of the globe, explaining how the rites of passage are common in their lives and how it's normal for these men to risk their lives just to join the higher rankings.

I will go into as much detail within the examples as possible. The case studies are located in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Brazil. I will also look at a very common ritual that happens here in our own country, Canada, as well as most of the westernized world.

This case study evolved from religion and has become a norm in today's societal culture. I will also discuss how some of the case studies should be

terminated, or replaced with safe solutions. Possible substitutes will be analyzed and discussed, and explained thoroughly for the readers' benefit.

Background

Rites of passage have been circling the globe for as long as mankind has been around. Man has always been able to find a way to challenge himself. Men have been competing since the dawn of time. Challenging oneself has always been a way of proving courage, but many people take it too far, or situations become out of hand. Many men challenge others, to win rights such as elder status, women, and voting rights.

War. It is fought by whom? Men... Men that need a challenge. Men that want to fight, and win. The essence of winning is one of the greatest feelings a man will have in his life. Winning a game, a good wife, a child or winning at life in general. They reap the rewards as well. Men need to win. It's as simple as that too. Everyone knows it, but not everyone will accept it.

Man everywhere has challenged life, and death, forever.

Rites of passage have been around forever. Men have generally been the ones to indicate when it is time to either be in a passage ritual, or send their sons to 'find themselves'. A few examples of some of the more common ones could include; Bar Mitzvah (a Jewish boys ceremony into manhood), the 'Hunters First

Kill' (when a man brings his son out hunting, and the boy makes his first kill. This brings him into manhood, stealing the life of an innocent creature...), and the 'redneck' coming of age (It is commonly known and joked about that a redneck man will get his son a prostitute for his 18th birthday, allowing him to enter manhood)ⁱⁱ.

Do you notice something?

All of those examples are boys turning into men. This is very common in rites of passage from all around the world. In many cultures, both old and new, boys turning into men have been the most sought after ritual in their meager lives. Those examples were also, for the most part, relatively safe.

An issue arises when the rite of passage becomes a dangerous tradition. This has not always been problematic though. When colonization first began, the explorers and settlers thought of the rites of passage as cultural ideologies. They did not have much of a problem with them. Rites of passage did not become a big issue until missionaries began to spread the word of the Lord. They saw the rites of passage that the indigenous people were going through to be acts of Satan and against the Lord's word.

ii Hepburn, Ned. "15 Rites of Passage From Around the World | Manolith." Manolith | Men's Lifestyle | Humor, Sports, Weird News, Style, Girls, Entertainment & Gadgets. 14 July 2009. Web. 08 Mar. 2011.

<<http://www.manolith.com/2009/07/14/rites-of-passage/>>.

We have noticed over the years, with our bettered technology, health and hygiene, that many of the traditions and rituals are dangerous and deadly. Since many of them involve blood loss and open wounds, we believe that that is harmful. We, as a society think that when someone submits to a group of men slicing someone open repeatedly, they must be either insane or dead. But they are not.

The men that participate in the rituals are willing participants because it would shame them and their families to not follow the ancient traditions, no matter how painful. We began to see many of the traditions as satanic and evil. Though in many cases, we were right. Some of the rituals were just plain inappropriate for life today.

“In preparation for war or in compensation for war deaths, a group may sacrifice hundreds of pigs to call forth the aid of the ancestors. Cannibalism and head-hunting—not universally practiced—were often aimed at rejuvenation or acquiring the bravery and good characteristics of the deceased, with wives eating a portion of their husbands' dead bodies to incorporate their virility and young warriors displaying enemies' heads as symbols of their own magic and efficacy.”ⁱⁱⁱ

This is just some of what the people of Papua New Guinea did. There were attempts to get rid of the rituals of the indigenous peoples. A 59 year old

ⁱⁱⁱ Zimmer-Tamakoshi, Laura. "Culture of Papua New Guinea - Traditional, History, People, Clothing, Traditions, Women, Beliefs, Food, Customs." Countries and Their Cultures. Web. 08 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html>>.

missionary man by the name of James Chalmers was killed and eaten by cannibals in Papua New Guinea in 1901^{iv}. As you can see, the progression of this topic, into an issue became apparent when Chalmers was eaten. He was a Scottish missionary accompanied by Rev. Oliver Tomkins. The date was April 4, 1901. At a place called Risk Point on the island of Goaribari a swarm of natives, with a multitude of weapons took forceful possession of the missionary ship. Chalmers decided to go ashore, but, anticipating trouble, urged Mr. Tomkins to remain aboard the vessel. Mr. Tomkins, however, insisted on sharing whatever dangers might await his beloved leader, so the two went ashore together to the village of Dopina. The men aboard the vessel never saw them again^v.

There have been some who scrutinize the rituals that will be examined. But for the most part, people try and stay out of it. People think, "I'm on the other side of the world," or, "How is it affecting me?" It is true that it is only affecting those involved. But it is affecting them in a harsh and scary way, death.

^{iv} Herzog, Johann Jakob, Philip Schaff, Albert Hauck, Samuel Macauley Jackson, Charles Colebrook Sherman, and George William Gilmore. *The New Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume XI: Son of Man-Tremellius: Embracing Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical Theology and Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Biography from the Earliest times to the Present Day.*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1950. Print.

^v Harrison, Eugene Meyers. "James Chalmers Scottish Missionary Explorer - Giants of the Missionary Trail by Eugene M. Harrison." *Giants of the Missionary Trail: the Life Stories of Eight Men Who Defied Death and Demons*. Fairfax, VA: Fairfax Baptist Temple, 1990. Wholesome Words Christian Website. Web. 09 Mar. 2011.

<<http://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/giants/biochalmers.html>>.

Death seems to come to many who participate in the rituals, which is why they are scrutinized in the first place. Nobody has ever really tried to stop them, only the missionary expeditions from earlier in history. There have been efforts to get rid of the strange cultures, until we, as the 'developed' people of the world, realized that cultures and heritages are important. We are now trying to preserve traditions and culture.

There are still some people that think that many of the rites of passage should stop because they are putting people in danger everywhere.

Role of Control

Nobody is in control of the world's rites of passage. People have been putting themselves through rites of passage for as long as there have been people. It is in our blood to define our status as human by being in control of who we are, and who is in charge.

People who choose to participate in these rituals are in control of themselves. Some may dispute that they are pressured into doing the rituals by their peer groups, but in society, that is how life works. If a young man has to leave the tribe for a month and wander the wilderness on his own, and the people of their world have been doing that since the dawn of time, the young man will concur, and participate in the act.

Some may also argue that the chiefs or lords or masters of the tribes/societies that participate in the rites of passage are in control. They may say that these authority figures are in charge because they enforce the rules and regulations of the rituals.

History also deals a great amount with how the people of those cultures respond to the rituals. If the people have been cliff diving, for example, since the original tribe arrived at that destination, they will continue to cliff dive.

It may be absurd or difficult to understand, but nobody is really in control of the rites of passage except the participants. But even then, their minds may be wavered to believe that they are doing the right thing.

Religious aspects

Religion has been a ceaselessly helpful partner to many rites of passage. They tend to go hand in hand in many instances. When it comes to today's religions, many, if not all of them have their own rites of passage of some sort that the men practicing the religion must endure. Many religions, even cults have believed in self mutilation rites of passage.

The Cult of Cybele, which originated as early as the 6th century BCE, was one of the bloody cults. There were both priests and priestesses that were in charge of the sermons and ceremonies. As a man was becoming a priest in the

Cult of Cybele, he had to castrate himself. During this initiation there was wild music, chanting and frenzied dancing^{vi}.

By attuning ourselves to what in different traditions has been called the image of God, the everlasting soul, or the higher self, we are able to fulfill our mission in life^{vii}. And that mission is quite often making yourself better; and many accomplish this by means of rituals, or rites of passage.

As human beings, we have found a peaceful balance between our spiritual and religious lives. And that is why we strive to be better. When men put themselves through these, quite often, painful rites of passage to earn themselves a higher meaning, they are quite often, showing their gods how much they care.

Experts

Through my research I have found a few experts in varying fields that I have touched on, and will touch on further in this work.

^{vi} Jahnige, J. "The Cult of Cybele." KET Distance Learning Overview - HOMEPAGE - Welcome! Nov. 2003. Web. 17 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.dl.ket.org/latin3/mores/religion/cultcybele.htm>>.

^{vii} Brussat, Mary Ann, and Frederic. "Spirituality & Practice: Spiritual Practice Homepage: You." Spirituality & Practice: Resources for Spiritual Journeys. Web. 17 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices.php?id=36>>.

Gilbert Herdt, PhD, is a cultural anthropologist, and a Professor of Sexuality Studies and Anthropology. Dr. Herdt has written about sexual cultures, and sexual and gender identity development cross-culturally and in the United States. Dr. Herdt's studies of the Sambia people of Papua New Guinea made famous in a series of books and papers. The first he wrote is a key case study that analyzes how culture and society create sexual meanings and practices. In the U.S. Dr. Herdt has studied adolescents and their families, the emergence of HIV and gay culture, and the role that social policy plays in people's sexual health. Herdt has taught at Stanford University, the University of Chicago, the University of Amsterdam, and the University of Washington. His publications include nearly 30 single and edited books, and more than 100 scientific papers.^{viii}

Paul Dodson is a London-based Australian who spends most of his time on the road researching and little time on the computer uploading new data. He is a freelance researcher and he covers a broad spectrum of topics. He belongs to many info sharing sites which is where he published his found information. On his personal website he makes it very clear what he does in the followed quote.^{ix}

^{viii} "Gilbert Herdt Bio." National Sexuality Resource Center (NSRC). Web. 28 Apr. 2011.

<http://nsrc.sfsu.edu/gilbert_herd_t_bio>.

^{ix} Dodson, Paul. "Paul Dodson." An Aussie in London. 2011. Web. 28 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.anaussieinlondon.co.uk/paul-dodson-bio.php>>.

"I have successfully ordered chicken in over 80 countries and I now know the pronunciation of 'crazy' in eight different languages. Occasionally I take photos and write travel articles in exchange for pastry-based snacks."^x

Case Studies

Sambia Tribe of Papua New Guinea, and Their Boyhood Initiations

In the mountains of New Guinea, live a tribe of 2000 or so persons that all belong to the Sambia Tribe. They are a hunting and horticultural people in some of the countries most rugged terrain. The population is spread wide through narrow river valleys in a thinly populated rainforest; rainfall is heavy; and even today, surrounding mountains keep the area isolated. Sambia settlements are small, well-defined, hamlets. These hamlets used to be riddled with warfare.^{xi}

Warfare was constantly raging among the Sambia tribes, and it conditioned the values and masculine stereotypes surrounding the male initiation cult. Strength is a pivotal idea in this male philosophy. Strength, which has its behavioral and physical aspects, could be directly translated by the

^x Dodson, Paul. "Paul Dodson." An Aussie in London. 2011. Web. 28 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.anaussieinlondon.co.uk/paul-dodson-bio.php>>.

^{xi} Herdt, Gilbert H. *Rituals of Manhood: Male Initiation in Papua New Guinea*. Berkeley: University of California, 1982. 203-06. Print.

Sambia into 'maleness' and/or 'manliness'. For the Sambia, masculinity is only achieved through the initiation process.^{xii}

Masculinity is of utmost importance to the Sambia tribe. Hunting still predominates as a masculine activity through which the protein is acquired. A man, his wife and their children usually cohabit within a single, small, round hut. Sometimes this unit is expanded through polygamy, in which case a man, his co-wives, and their children may occupy the single dwelling. But before a man could get to the point at which he can marry and have children and even be labeled a 'man' he must go through years of initiation.^{xiii}

All boys are forcibly initiated; there is seldom any choice in the participation in this initiatory process. The boys must learn to perceive their own unbending masculinity as their protection against the inconstant world. Men undergo a process of initiation for a span of ten years, while women do not partake in any form of initiation. The purpose of the initiation is to be truly masculine.^{xiv}

The rite of passage, or initiation, begins sometime between the ages of seven and ten. The boys are torn away from their mothers, and all females, and

^{xii} Herdt, Gilbert H. *Rituals of Manhood: Male Initiation in Papua New Guinea*. Berkeley: University of California, 1982. 203-06. Print.

^{xiii} Herdt, Gilbert H. *Rituals of Manhood: Male Initiation in Papua New Guinea*. Berkeley: University of California, 1982. 203-06. Print.

^{xiv} "The Making of a Man." Sambia. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://milena.27designs.com/>>.

placed in a special house in which they will live for the next ten years.^{xv} The boys are kept with other boys of their own age and will have contact with only them, and other males of the community. This process combines paternal love with very rigid military ways that they learn to live. Their journey from childhood to adulthood is captured in this time frame, through the initiations.^{xvi}

The purpose of the separation from women is that having no form of contact with females may be harmful to the ageing process. Despite family togetherness in early childhood, strict taboos based on beliefs about menstrual pollution still separate men and women in their sleeping and eating arrangements.^{xvii}

Regardless of what the boys think about what is happening, or what they are doing, they are forced to successfully complete the initiation process. The 'rebel' is generally the first to begin the initiations as an example so the others will follow suit. The first stage initiation is partially the construction of the 'cult-house' that they will be living in for the next several years.^{xviii}

^{xv} McKay, Brett, and Kate. "Male Rites of Passages From Around the World | The Art of Manliness." *The Art of Manliness | Men's Interests and Lifestyle*. 21 Feb. 2010. Web. 20 Mar. 2011. <<http://artofmanliness.com/2010/02/21/male-rites-of-passage-from-around-the-world/>>.

^{xvi} Herdt, Gilbert H. *Rituals of Manhood: Male Initiation in Papua New Guinea*. Berkeley: University of California, 1982. 203-06. Print.

^{xvii} "The Making of a Man." *Sambia*. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://milena.27designs.com/>>.

^{xviii} "The Making of a Man." *Sambia*. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://milena.27designs.com/>>.

The initiation process is comprised of six sections. The first, second, and third are rolled together. During their stay at the cult-house, the boys hold a homosexual status. The boys must go through a lot of pain in these steps. The elders must have respect from the boys and the boys must obey the rules. This is accomplished by initiating fear, through beating and traumatizing the boys.^{xix}

The boys are required to go through extremely heavy nose bleeds as well as vomiting and defecation. The nose bleeds are brought on by long sharp sticks poking through the membrane in the top of their nose. They are forced to ingest sugarcane which is normally only chewed. This causes the vomiting and defecation. All of these are said to be part of a cleansing of the body. It is also to make sure they are not still contaminated by the women in their lives. Once the boys have been cleared of contamination, they are forced to perform fellatio on the elders. Their goal is to take in as much semen as they can.^{xx}

Only oral insemination, men believe, can activate the boys' semen organ, thereby precipitating his push into adult reproductive competence. The accumulating semen, injected time and again for years, is believed crucial for the formation of biological maleness and masculine comportment. The Sambia believe that only semen can activate the sex traits in a boy. And only men have

^{xix} "The Sambia Tribe." Tripod. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://lrivera0327.tripod.com/>>.

^{xx} "The Making of a Man." Sambia. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://milena.27designs.com/>>.

semen; boys have none. It is their belief that only by ingesting semen, will a man produce his own semen.^{xxi}

By the third initiation, the boys are taken into the forest where they are pointed towards a structure facing a tree. They are told to remove a pubic hair and hand it to one of the elders who then places it in the trunk of a large tree. This is a more peaceful part of the initiation, for the boys are told stories of the tribes past and special significant totems in the Sambia life. During this section, they are forewarned not to be promiscuous during their heterosexual relationships, or else they would be killed, with no regret.^{xxii}

A formal marriage takes place as the next step in the initiation. This is a shared ceremony, where multiple initiates are married. The heterosexual interaction begins with the marriage ceremony, depending on the stage of the spouse, for the girls are married off as young as ten years old. The marriage is arranged through the girl's parents creating a formal contract with the husband's family. The girls would have lived with their families until marriage unlike the boys. Since the girl is too young for sex, the couple engages in other sexual activity. The women also ingest the semen of their husbands as a way to bring milk into their breasts. These relations are done in secrecy, away from the home

^{xxi} Herdt, Gilbert H. *Rituals of Manhood: Male Initiation in Papua New Guinea*. Berkeley: University of California, 1982. 203-06. Print.

^{xxii} "The Making of a Man." Sambia. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://milena.27designs.com/>>.

in the forest. The couple has to leave space between the 'meetings' (for the husband is still living in the cult-house), because too much interaction with the wife could damage the husband.^{xxiii}

In the fifth stage initiation, the youths are taught how to purify themselves. Once married, they have to constantly purify themselves of any contamination from the women. The young men follow their wives menstrual periods with heavy nosebleeds brought on by themselves.^{xxiv}

Throughout the final stage of the initiation process, the men are living with their spouses. The final stage itself is the celebration of the first born child. The first born brings him closer to accomplishing his main goal of becoming a man and entering manhood. A second child is needed in order to have completely attained full personhood in both men and women. The births of the first three children born are celebrated, while the rest are not because the man has already shown his capability of reproducing.^{xxv}

Upon successful completion of this initiatory cycle, men are considered truly masculine and worthy.^{xxvi}

^{xxiii} "The Making of a Man." Sambia. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://milena.27designs.com/>>.

^{xxiv} "The Making of a Man." Sambia. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://milena.27designs.com/>>.

^{xxv} "The Sambia Tribe." Tripod. Web. 19 Mar. 2011. <<http://rivera0327.tripod.com/>>.

^{xxvi} McKay, Brett, and Kate. "Male Rites of Passages From Around the World | The Art of Manliness." The Art of Manliness | Men's Interests and Lifestyle. 21 Feb. 2010. Web. 20 Mar. 2011. <<http://artofmanliness.com/2010/02/21/male-rites-of-passage-from-around-the-world/>>.

This, as you can plainly understand, is dangerous, horrid, terrifying, and a little disgusting. The boys have to go through, without any personal opinion, this frightening initiation and participate in bloodcurdling and vulgar circumstances.

The ceremonious bleeding of the nose is both painful and dangerous. The procedure is crude, but effective. The boy is held against a tree and stiff, sharp grasses and sticks are shoved up his nose until the blood starts flowing freely. Once the elders see blood, they let out a collective war cry. After the bloodletting, the boys undergo severe beatings and lashings.^{xxvii}

Is that not horrible, malicious torture?

Nosebleeds, though not normally dangerous to our health, can be a problem if you cause them to occur yourself through trauma such as picking your nose^{xxviii}, or stabbing a stick up your nose. Nose bleeding can be life-threatening at times, especially in older people.^{xxix} If the young men who endure

^{xxvii} McKay, Brett, and Kate. "Male Rites of Passages From Around the World | The Art of Manliness." *The Art of Manliness | Men's Interests and Lifestyle*. 21 Feb. 2010. Web. 20 Mar. 2011. <<http://artofmanliness.com/2010/02/21/male-rites-of-passage-from-around-the-world/>>.

^{xxviii} "NOSEBLEEDS." Dr. Sears Official Website | Parenting Advice, Parenting Books & More. 2006. Web. 31 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.askdrsears.com/html/8/T082700.asp>>.

^{xxix} "Nose Bleed Information - Causes Of Bloody Nose." *India Guide - Culture, Facts, Lifestyle, Cars, Bikes, Art & Entertainment*. Iloveindia.com. Web. 31 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.iloveindia.com/home-remedies/symptoms-nose-bleed.html>>.

this bleeding get a head-ache along with the nosebleeds, then that could represent a sign of high blood pressure, and could die.^{xxx}

The boys are taken from their homes between the ages of seven and ten.^{xxxi} This is the same age group in which separation anxiety peaks. Separation anxiety is when a child is, or expecting, to be separated from home or a loved one.^(xxxii) It is known that at least 12% of children will suffer from anxiety disorder before the age of 18. Meaning at some point, 12% of the boys that were forcibly taken from their mothers, will suffer from; stomach aches, dizziness, racing heart, shallow breathing, headaches, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, or having a panic attack.^{xxxiii} This could, some would argue, be part of the reason why the young boys grow close to the abusive elders. Because they are a form of other authority figure in their lives. The boys could be listening to the abusive elders because they need someone to look up too, and the elders are the only people available for that.

^{xxx} "NOSEBLEEDS." Dr. Sears Official Website | Parenting Advice, Parenting Books & More. 2006. Web. 31 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.askdrsears.com/html/8/T082700.asp>>.

^{xxxi} Herdt, Gilbert H. *Rituals of Manhood: Male Initiation in Papua New Guinea*. Berkeley: University of California, 1982. 203-06. Print.

^{xxxii} "Separation Anxiety Disorder | Anxiety BC." AnxietyBC™ | Anxiety BC. 2007-2011. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.anxietybc.com/parent/separation.php>>.

^{xxxiii} "Separation Anxiety Disorder | Anxiety BC." AnxietyBC™ | Anxiety BC. 2007-2011. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.anxietybc.com/parent/separation.php>>.

The boys are forced to perform fellatio on the elders and swallow the semen, which is a form of sexual abuse. In our society, this is obviously not accepted. Sexual abuse in any form is never the fault of a child or teenager^{xxxiv}, and in the case of the Sambia, is completely to blame on the elders. Depending on how far the elders take the inseminating part(s) of the initiation, the boys could require serious medical attention (psychologically). Some rape and sexual abuse survivors suffer from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), and need immediate medical attention.^{xxxv} These boys could have had their brains manipulated in a way to believe that the abuse was ok, which is what many abusers say. They also say to keep quiet, or not to tell anyone.^{xxxvi}

There is no way to stop this. The ritualistic initiation has been going on for centuries. It is a part of the Sambia tribe and they have the right to either change it themselves, or do nothing. Currently, there are no solutions. The tribe will continue on and initiate the boys unless someone, or a group intervenes, which I doubt will happen because the tribe would argue that they are preserving their heritage and traditions.

^{xxxiv} "Adolescent Survivors." MaleSurvivor. 2007. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.malesurvivor.org/adolescent-survivors.html>>.

^{xxxv} "Male Rape." Rape Recovery Help and Info Page. 1996-2010. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.hopeforhealing.org/male.html>>.

^{xxxvi} "Adolescent Survivors." MaleSurvivor. 2007. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.malesurvivor.org/adolescent-survivors.html>>.

Vanuatu Islands, Pentecost Land-Diving

On the French speaking, Pentecost Island, in the Pacific Islands of Vanuatu, a very bizarre and dangerous ritual takes place.^{xxxvii} On this island, a ceremony takes place which turns boys into men. This ceremony involves young men jumping off a tall tower, with nothing but a vine wrapped around their ankles.^{xxxviii} The tower is 35 meters tall, but when it is the boy's first time jumping, he will jump from a lower platform. This land-diving ceremony occurs for the first time for the boys shortly after being circumcised.^{xxxix} A land diver's objective, or at least one of the requirements of the land dive, is that he must tap his head upon the ground as he falls.^{xl}

This ritual's origins can be traced back to a gutsy local woman, known only as Tamalie's Wife. Tamalie's Wife was quite unhappy with her husband. She tried very hard to avoid consummating the marriage with Tamalie. She set off to the top of a Banyan tree, and with 'other' things on Tamalie's mind, he

^{xxxvii} Dodson, Paul. "Land Diving." 2camels Festivals and Events. 2011. Web. 01 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.2camels.com/vanuatu-land-diving.php>>.

^{xxxviii} Olsen, Erik. "Land Diving in Vanuatu | Gadling.com." Gadling | Travel Blog | News, Stories, Deals, and Tips. 27

Nov. 2006. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.gadling.com/2006/11/27/land-diving/>>.

^{xxxix} Dodson, Paul. "Land Diving." 2camels Festivals and Events. 2011. Web. 01 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.2camels.com/vanuatu-land-diving.php>>.

^{xl} Olsen, Erik. "Land Diving in Vanuatu | Gadling.com." Gadling | Travel Blog | News, Stories, Deals, and Tips. 27 Nov.

2006. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.gadling.com/2006/11/27/land-diving/>>.

pursued her up the tree. On seeing her husband approach, Tamalie's Wife took the plunge and leaped out of the tree. Tamalie himself followed shortly after, yet he had not had the wits, like his wife, to tie a length of vine around his ankles. In the end, Tamalie's Wife lived to tell the tale and in doing so created a local annual rite.^{xli}

Now, every April and May when the yam harvest is ready, the vines (Liana vines) are most supple. This ensures a strong vine that will (hopefully) hold up when the men and boys take their leap.^{xlii} The ceremony is also sometimes called a rite of fertility. There are even tours available to visit the Vanuatu land diving ceremonies, every Saturday from April to early June.^{xliii}

Since the ritual now attracts large crowds of tourists, foreigners are not allowed to participate, but they can do it on their own time. Its called bungee jumping here. The elders of Pentecost Island have agreed on this. In 1974, Queen Elizabeth visited Vanuatu, and witnessed a common mistake made by many of

^{xli} Dodson, Paul. "Land Diving." 2camels Festivals and Events. 2011. Web. 01 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.2camels.com/vanuatu-land-diving.php>>.

^{xlii} Dodson, Paul. "Land Diving." 2camels Festivals and Events. 2011. Web. 01 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.2camels.com/vanuatu-land-diving.php>>.

^{xliii} "Vanuatu Tourism | Entertainment | Nagol or Land Diving." Vanuatu Tourism | Vanuatu Islands | Pacific Holiday Destination | Accommodation | Tours & Activities. Vanuatu Tourism Office, 2009. Web. 02 Apr. 2011.

<<http://vanuatu.travel/nagol-or-land-diving.html>>.

the participants. The man who jumped had miscalculated how long his vine was to be, and the Queen witnessed the diver plummet to his death.^{xliv}

The vines are not elastic, and the jumpers will not bounce back up. A miscalculation in vine length and a diver may smash into the ground headfirst, resulting in serious injury or death. Vines that are too dry or weak may snap. There are no nets, no helmets and no safety equipment of any kind.^{xlv}

If the jumper survives hitting the ground (if their vine broke or through miscalculation) they would suffer a lot of damage from smacking head-first into the ground. A hard blow to the head can cause the brain to hit the skull. These injuries can be mild, moderate or severe and can involve bleeding and damage to nerve fibers. The symptoms of blunt head trauma depend on how severe the injury is. Brain injury brings two problems: the initial injury, and the later effects of pressure, which builds as the brain tissue swells. A mild brain injury can bring brief unconsciousness (which can lead to more serious issues if the diver cannot come to), a confused state, a headache, balance problems, trouble remembering things or concentrating, a shift in mood, and sensory trouble such as a ringing in the ears and blurred vision. If the head trauma is more severe, the divers could

^{xliv} Ronca, Debra. "HowStuffWorks "How Land Diving Works"" Howstuffworks "Adventure" Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <<http://adventure.howstuffworks.com/land-diving.htm>>.

^{xlv} Ronca, Debra. "HowStuffWorks "How Land Diving Works"" Howstuffworks "Adventure" Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <<http://adventure.howstuffworks.com/land-diving.htm>>.

experience all of those symptoms plus a few more. These include seizures, continual vomiting or nausea, dilated pupils in one or both eyes, a lasting headache, weakness in the limbs, and extreme confusion.^{xlvi}

It is common for men who are about to jump to settle any disputes they may have with their; friends, family or wives. This is a common practice for just incase they become injured or worse, die.^{xlvii}

On a rough landing, or a failed landing, a man or boy could rupture his spleen.^{xlviii} Your spleen is located just under your ribcage in the left of your body. The spleen is necessary to your overall health by fighting infection and filtering old blood in the bloodstream. A ruptured spleen is an extremely serious condition. Without treatment, a spleen that has been ruptured can cause life-threatening internal bleeding.^{xlix} Death is eventual with enough internal bleeding.

^{xlvi} Oakes, Ranlyn. "Blunt Head Trauma & Effects | LIVESTRONG.COM." LIVESTRONG.COM - Lose Weight & Get Fit with Diet, Nutrition & Fitness Tools. 3 Sept. 2009. Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.livestrong.com/article/23059-blunt-head-trauma-effects/>>.

^{xlvii} Istvan, Zoltan. "Reporter's Notebook: S. Pacific Ritual Bungee Jumping." Daily Nature and Science News and Headlines | National Geographic News. National Geographic Today, 26 Nov. 2002. Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/11/1125_021126_TVVanuatu.html>.

^{xlviii} Istvan, Zoltan. "Reporter's Notebook: S. Pacific Ritual Bungee Jumping." Daily Nature and Science News and Headlines | National Geographic News. National Geographic Today, 26 Nov. 2002. Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/11/1125_021126_TVVanuatu.html>.

^{xlix} Staff, Mayo Clinic. "Ruptured Spleen - MayoClinic.com." Mayo Clinic. 19 Nov. 2010. Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/ruptured-spleen/DS00872>>.

The only solutions that I can see actually happening are the islanders start to use elastic bungee chords instead of vines, for it would be much safer. I also think that the young boys should not be forced into the land diving. I think that they should choose when they are ready to make the plunge. All the people of Pentecost need to do is make this rite of passage safer. When the Queen came to visit, it was the wrong season and the liana vines they use as chords, were dry. Diver after diver hit the ground with one dying while the Queen sat in horror.¹

There is no end in sight for this specific rite of passage, and the land divers do not intend to change their ways anytime soon.ⁱⁱ

Satere-Mawe Tribe of Brazil and the Bullet-ant Glove

The Satere-Mawe is a small, indigenous Amazonian tribe who live off the land.ⁱⁱⁱ They grow manioc, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, white and purple yams and many fruits, especially oranges. As well as being expert farmers, the Satere-Mawe tribe are also hunters and gatherers, collecting; honey, brazil nuts, different varieties of coconuts, ants and other insects, tar, vines and different

¹ Lee, Mike. "Land Divers of Vanuatu - ABC News." ABCNews.com: Breaking News, Politics, World News, Good Morning America, Exclusive Interviews - ABC News. Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <<http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=130132>>.

ⁱⁱ Dodson, Paul. "Land Diving." 2camels Festivals and Events. 2011. Web. 01 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.2camels.com/vanuatu-land-diving.php>>.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Badass of the Week: The Satere Mawe." My Stupid Website. Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.amazingben.com/arf0136.html>>.

kinds of straw, used both for their own consumption and to be sold in the towns.^{liii}

The Satere-Mawe tribe has an extremely brutal rite of passage. The Bullet-ant glove. This is another rite of passage that brings boys, with difficulty, into manhood. The boys must wear these gloves for a total of 10 minutes.^{liv} Some people would say, "Oh, they just have to wear gloves for ten minutes, that does not seem too difficult". But they would be wrong.

The glove is prepared by the tribesmen. The ants are knocked out with a natural sedative and they become docile. While the ants are compliant, the tribesmen building the gloves, knit the ants into a leaf based, overlapping layered glove, with the stingers pointing inward. Once the ants have regained consciousness, the boys are to put them on and endure the pain for an excruciating ten minutes.^{lv}

Once the ritual is over, it is common for the hands and limbs of the prospective men to violently spasm for days after the ceremony. Then they have

^{liii} "Native American Indian Cultures - Satere-Maue Indians." Native American Indian Cultures - Mexico, South America. Hands Around the World. Web. 02 Apr. 2011. <<http://indian-cultures.com/Cultures/satere.html>>.

^{liv} McKay, Brett, and Kate. "Male Rites of Passages From Around the World | The Art of Manliness." The Art of Manliness | Men's Interests and Lifestyle. 21 Feb. 2010. Web. 20 Mar. 2011. <<http://artofmanliness.com/2010/02/21/male-rites-of-passage-from-around-the-world/>>.

^{lv} McKay, Brett, and Kate. "Male Rites of Passages From Around the World | The Art of Manliness." The Art of Manliness | Men's Interests and Lifestyle. 21 Feb. 2010. Web. 20 Mar. 2011. <<http://artofmanliness.com/2010/02/21/male-rites-of-passage-from-around-the-world/>>.

to do it 24 more times. In order to fully ascend to the highest rank of the tribal hierarchy, Satere-Mawe adolescent males have to brave this immeasurable agony at least 25 times.^{lvi}

The bullet ant, or *Paraponera*, is an ant about 18-25mm in length and looks like a wingless wasp. This ant has venom. Their sting allegedly feels like being you are being shot by a bullet. It is also called 24 hour ant by the locals in the rainforests, from Nicaragua to Paraguay, because the venom lasts that long. People that have been stung by the ant describe the pain as: "Pure, intense, brilliant pain. Like fire-walking over flaming charcoal with a 3-inch rusty nail in your heel."^{lvii} Ouch.

The bullet ant is rated 4.0+ on the Schmidt Pain Index (which sting hurts the most?). The scale was created in 1984 by an entomologist named Justin O. Schmidt. It has a ranking from zero to four, where zero is most benign, and four is most painful.^{lviii}

^{lvi} "Badass of the Week: The Satere Mawe." My Stupid Website. Web. 02 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.amazingben.com/arf0136.html>>.

^{lvii} Keirt. "Bullet Ant Ritual: Deadly, Yet Still Practiced | ScienceraY." ScienceraY | All That Is Science, Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics. 31 Aug. 2009. Web. 02 Apr. 2011.

<<http://scienceraY.com/biology/microbiology/bullet-ant-ritual-deadly-yet-still-practiced/>>.

^{lviii} Batts, Shelley. "Schmidt Pain Index (Which Sting Hurts the Worst?) : Retrospectacle: A Neuroscience Blog." Scienceblogs.com. 16 May 2007. Web. 02 Apr. 2011.

<http://scienceblogs.com/retrospectacle/2007/05/schmidt_pain_index_which_sting.php>.

In other words, the sting from the Bullet Ant is the most painful in the world. And if these young men have to do this glove ceremony and endure the pain, 25 times, I think it is a most horrid torture.

To become a man, this entire process is what a boy must do; they have no choice in the matter. They are forced into it, and they must show as little discomfort as possible by singing and/or dancing about for the ten minute period.^{lix}

There have been no efforts to stop the rituals. In the 16th century, many indigenous tribes from Brazil were assimilated, enslaved and exterminated by the Portuguese Settlers. A few isolated communities were the exception to this, with the Satere-Mawe included.^{lx} Since their discovery, there have been no efforts to stop their ritual, because in today's society, we try to preserve traditional cultures and ceremonies, even painful ones such as the bullet ant glove.

^{lix} Bouffard, Alexander. "Bullet Ant Gloves — The Lewis Review." The Lewis Review. 8 Mar. 2011. Web. 02 Apr. 2011.

<<http://thelewisreview.com/culture/bullet-ant-gloves/>>.

^{lx} Ribeiro, Darcy. O Povo Brasileiro. Vol. 7. 1997. Brazilian Studies. Web. 02 Apr. 2011.

<[http://translate.google.ca/translate?](http://translate.google.ca/translate?hl=en&sl=pt&u=http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/O_Povo_Brasileiro&ei=7KKYTeGMIsWEtqfqpqGAAw&sa=X&oi=translate&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBwQ7gEwAA&prev=/search%3Fq%3DDarcy%2BRibeiro%2B-%2BO%2BPovo%2BBrasileiro%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG%26biw%3D1676%26bih%3D844%26prmd%3Ddivnsbo)

[hl=en&sl=pt&u=http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/O_Povo_Brasileiro&ei=7KKYTeGMIsWEtqfqpqGAAw&sa=X&oi=translate&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBwQ7gEwAA&prev=/search%3Fq%3DDarcy%2BRibeiro%2B-%2BO%2BPovo%2BBrasileiro%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG%26biw%3D1676%26bih%3D844%26prmd%3Ddivnsbo](http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/O_Povo_Brasileiro&ei=7KKYTeGMIsWEtqfqpqGAAw&sa=X&oi=translate&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBwQ7gEwAA&prev=/search%3Fq%3DDarcy%2BRibeiro%2B-%2BO%2BPovo%2BBrasileiro%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG%26biw%3D1676%26bih%3D844%26prmd%3Ddivnsbo)>.

Role by International Organizations

There are very few, if any, organizations in place today, whose main goal is to rid the world of its traditional cultures. But there are many who do this on the side, however accidental, in an attempt to enact Globalization. There are many organizations who strive for total Globalization. Some of them include The UN, WTO, World Bank and Greenpeace.

Now first off, Globalization. Globalization is the trend toward greater interconnectedness of the world's financial, economic, technological, political, sociological, cultural, ecological and geographical systems.^{lxi}

"The greatest challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people, instead of leaving billions of them behind in squalor. Inclusive globalization must be built on the great enabling force of the market, but market forces alone will not achieve it."^{lxii}

The UN is interested in globalization because they strive to bring together the world financially and socially. The UN was founded in 1945 to maintain peace and security. One of the UN's main purposes is to help nations work together to improve the lives of poor people, to conquer hunger, disease and illiteracy, and to encourage respect for each others rights and freedoms. To bring

^{lxi} Wallace, Clarke, Bruce, and John. Global Connections: Canadian and World Issues. 2nd ed. Pearson Education Canada, 2008. Print.

^{lxii} "Globalization." Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World. United Nations. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/globalization/>>.

the world together, happily.^{lxiii} Which some would say, is in direct relation with globalization.

The UN has also bothered to gather some statistics about globalization. Including facts like: more than US\$1.5 billion is now exchanged on the world's currency markets each day, Industrialized countries (with 19 per cent of the world's population) account for 71% of global trade in goods and services, 58 per cent of foreign direct investment, and 91% of all Internet users and of the world's six billion people, 1.2 billion live in extreme poverty, or on an income of roughly US \$1 a day or less.^{lxiv}

The UN has ties with Globalization because the work of the UN reaches every corner of the globe. Although best known for peacekeeping, peacebuilding, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance, there are many other ways the UN affects our lives and brings the world together making it a better place.^{lxv} The UN is harmonizing Earth, trying to make it one peaceful planet.

The WTO is interested in globalization, for trade agreements, of course. They want the world to come together as one so it is easier to make trade

^{lxiii} "The United Nations at a Glance." Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World. United Nations. Web. 03 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml>>.

^{lxiv} "Globalization." Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World. United Nations. Web. 03 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/globalization/>>.

^{lxv} "The United Nations at a Glance." Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World. United Nations. Web. 03 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml>>.

agreements, with limited tariffs. The WTO represents the rules-based regime of the policy of economic globalization. The central operating principal of the WTO is that commercial interests should supersede all others.^{lxvi}

The WTO also conducts many surveys, in various parts of the world seeing what the people think about trade, especially with developing countries. One appealing conclusion from a survey in 2002 was that there is apparently stronger support for trade in some emerging economies than in industrial countries. Support for globalization appeared to be diminishing in the industrialized countries even though a majority of the public still supported it. In this survey, 78 per cent of Americans (that were surveyed) said that trade was good for their country. In a 2007 survey, there was near universal approval of trade in China and India. Ninety-one per cent of those surveyed in China expressed approval of trade. In India, 89 per cent believed that trade was good for the country.^{lxvii}

The World Bank is also paying attention to globalization. Low income countries are given funds for debt relief and then their processes would get going vigorously. This is where the World Bank kicks into high gear. They have a vital role to play by working with governments and ensure strong governance,

^{lxvi} "Globalization and the World Trade Organization." International Forum on Globalization. Web. 03 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.ifg.org/wto.html>>.

^{lxvii} WTO. Globalization and Trade. Geneva: Publications Services WTO, 2009. 15-26. Print.

effective judicial systems, and a robust financial system. All these help fight corruption in these developing countries.^{lxviii}

“Globalization is all about risks and opportunities, which should be managed at the national level by a strong social, structural, and financial system. Globally, there is a need to establish a strong international financial architecture and get rid of the challenges thrown open to us. This is where globalization and role of World Bank cannot be denied.”^{lxix}

The World Bank was set up to help rebuild war-torn Europe, but soon thereafter turned its focus to the "underdeveloped" world to bring poor countries into the international economy, and started leaning towards globalization.^{lxx}

In a sense, the World Bank is determined to participate in the uprising of financial and economic globalization.

Greenpeace was established in Vancouver in 1971 to protest American nuclear weapons tests. Greenpeace is now a global environmental organization monitored by a central council in Amsterdam with over 2.8 million financial supporters worldwide. To maintain independence, it refuses money from governments, corporations, and political parties.^{lxxi}

^{lxviii} "Globalization and the Role of World Bank." Business Directory. Mapsofindia.com. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

<<http://business.mapsofindia.com/globalization/role-world-bank.html>>.

^{lxix} "Globalization and the Role of World Bank." Business Directory. Mapsofindia.com. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

<<http://business.mapsofindia.com/globalization/role-world-bank.html>>.

^{lxx} "Globalization and the International Monetary Fund." International Forum on Globalization. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.ifg.org/imf.html>>.

^{lxxi} "The History of Greenpeace | Greenpeace International." Inspiring Action for a Green and Peaceful Future |

Greenpeace USA. Greenpeace, 14 Sept. 2009. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

Greenpeace has been controversial since its beginning. Some praise it, yet some criticize their approach. Their approach could be criticized because it involves lobbying politicians and corporate executives, and campaigns to create market pressure. It is probably best known for its nonviolent direct action campaigns.^{lxxii}

Greenpeace has contributed towards globalization in the sense that it has encouraged people to perceive the world as one place; it stresses the idea that actions taken in a community have global consequences, and uses this premise to inform its strategies and motivate its members. At the same time, in recognition of the increasingly global environmental consequences of industrial behaviour, Greenpeace acts as a response to globalization by addressing these effects. Then, along with many other international non-governmental organizations, Greenpeace seeks to shape the globalizing process of which it is a part.^{lxxiii}

Financial globalization, which most of these organizations are trying to enforce, is the interconnectedness within a network of world cities, instead of nations. But any type of globalization means the destruction of local cultures and the weakening of traditional religious beliefs, only to be replaced by a

<<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/about/history/>>.

lxxii Huebener, Paul. "Globalization and Autonomy." Globalautonomy.ca. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

<http://www.globalautonomy.ca/global1/glossary_pop.jsp?id=OR.0053>.

lxxiii Huebener, Paul. "Globalization and Autonomy." Globalautonomy.ca. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

<http://www.globalautonomy.ca/global1/glossary_pop.jsp?id=OR.0053>.

homogenized culture.^{lxxiv} This means the loss of traditions, including the traditions shown in the case studies.

Canadian Case Study

Rites of passage in Canada are not the easiest to come by because we do not have a direct correlation with the land. We are a society of immigrants. But there is one tradition that stands out in our society. It is usually a cultural or religious belief system that causes this choice to be made. This tough choice is circumcision.^{lxxv}

Circumcision is when the foreskin, which is the skin that covers the tip of the penis, is removed. Circumcision is usually performed on the first or second day after birth.^{lxxvi}

Like any surgical procedure, circumcision has a few risks. Bleeding and infection in the circumcised area are the most common problems. And

^{lxxiv} Wallace, Clarke, Bruce, and John. *Global Connections: Canadian and World Issues*. 2nd ed. Pearson Education Canada, 2008. Print.

^{lxxv} Gavin, Mary L. "Circumcision." *KidsHealth - the Web's Most Visited Site about Children's Health*. July 2008. Web. 05 Apr. 2011. <<http://kidshealth.org/parent/system/surgical/circumcision.html>>.

^{lxxvi} "Circumcision -- Familydoctor.org." *Health Information for the Whole Family -- Familydoctor.org*. American Academy of Family Physicians, Dec. 2010. Web. 05 Apr. 2011. <<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/men/reproductive/042.html>>.

sometimes the skin of the newly exposed glands becomes irritated by the pressure of diapers and ammonia in the urine.^{lxxvii}

There was a rise and fall in excess male infant mortality rates that coincide with rising and falling circumcision rates. In 1942, 66% of male newborns were circumcised and the excess male infant mortality rate was 1.26. In 1954, the circumcision rates peaked at 85% where the excess male infant mortality rate was 1.3. It has fallen since. In 1990, only 59% of baby boys were circumcised and the excess male infant mortality rate followed suit, dropping to 1.25.^{lxxviii}

"In 1982, Dr. James L. Snyder was called to see a Virginia infant who had been circumcised using a Gomco clamp and electro-cautery.* The result was complete loss of the glands and shaft of the penis due to a full thickness burn. After this child's penis fell off at the level of the scrotum, he underwent a series of surgical procedures at major medical centers which have created a tube for urination through a pedicle skin graft. There is, of course, no tissue to create an erection and no nerves for genital sensation in this graft. He will never fully recover his sexual functions, which had been destroyed in the circumcision tragedy."^{lxxix}

*A Gomco clamp is a tool that has been used since 1935 to assist in the circumcision procedure.^{lxxx} Electro-cautery is a surgical technique

^{lxxvii} "Circumcision -- Familydoctor.org." Health Information for the Whole Family -- Familydoctor.org. American Academy of Family Physicians, Dec. 2010. Web. 05 Apr. 2011.

<<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/men/reproductive/042.html>>.

^{lxxviii} "Circumcision and Male Infant Mortality." Circumcision Resource Center. Web. 05 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.circumcision.org/mortality.htm>>.

^{lxxix} Snyder, James L. "The Problem of Circumcision in America." NOHARMM Access Page. Web. 05 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.noharrrmm.org/problem.htm>>.

^{lxxx} "CIRCLIST - Gomco Clamp." CIRCLIST. 2011. Web. 05 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.circlist.com/instrstechns/gomco.html>>.

which involves introducing high frequency current to a specific area of the body in order to remove unwanted tissue, like in a circumcision.^{lxxx}

The outer foreskin's concentration of nerves is impressive and its sensitivity to light touch, and pain alike, are similar to that of the penis as a whole. The foreskin's inner surface is different though. It's mucous like membrane, similar to the inside of the mouth, is very rich in nerves and blood vessels. Between the inner and outer layers of the foreskin is a structure called the rigged band that contains specialized nerve endings. The foreskins have several kinds of nerves and should be considered a structural and functional unit made up of specialized parts, for enhanced sexual pleasure. The foreskin protects the glands from abrasion and contact with clothes. The foreskin also increases sexual pleasure by sliding up and down on the shaft, stimulating the glands by alternately covering and exposing it.^{lxxxii}

Circumcisions are performed for religious or cultural reasons, or for health reasons. Newborn circumcision is thought to diminish the risk for cancer of the penis and lower the risk for cancer of the cervix in sexual partners. It is

^{lxxx} Smith, S. E. "What Is Electrocautery?" WiseGEEK: Clear Answers for Common Questions. Ed. O. Wallace. Web. 05 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-electrocautery.htm>>.

^{lxxxii} "Functions of the Foreskin." Circumcision Resource Center. Web. 05 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.circumcision.org/foreskin.htm>>.

also believed to decrease the risk of urinary tract infections in infants and lower the risk of certain sexually-transmitted diseases, especially HIV. Though none of this has been proven, still 65% of newborn North Americans are circumcised at birth.^{lxxxiii}

Most circumcisions done today are done either because it is the cultural norm, or for religious reasons. Jewish circumcision (bris or brit milah) is dependent on the acceptance of cultural myths. Of all the myths that Jews believe about circumcision, the one that is paramount, is the belief that all Jews circumcise. With this belief, Jewish people put themselves under tremendous pressure to conform. Bound by this burden to comply with social expectations, most Jewish parents do not recognize that circumcision is a choice. Since communications about circumcision are discouraged, there is virtually no awareness of others who feel similar conflicts and doubts around circumcision.^{lxxxiv}

The systematic removal of the foreskin owes itself in America to one man named Dr. Lewis Sayre. In 1870, Sayre drew an association between the foreskin and an orthopedic malady in a young boy. Through a series of extremely bizarre

^{lxxxiii} Perlstein, David. "Circumcision: Surgical Procedure Expectations, Complications and Information on MedicineNet.com." MedicineNet.com. Web. 05 Apr. 2011.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/circumcision_the_surgical_procedure/article.htm>.

^{lxxxiv} Singer, Raymond. "Circumcision Is a Choice." Jewish Circumcision Resource Center. Web. 05 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.jewishcircumcision.org/>>.

medical experiments, Sayre and his colleagues eventually determined that links existed between the foreskin and a vast range of ailments that included gout, asthma, hernias, epilepsy, rheumatism, curvature of the spine, tuberculosis and elephantiasis. But what causes circumcision to stick in the pediatric medicine practice was the strong belief that masturbation (thought at the time to cause bed-wetting, intractable forms of insanity and mental retardation) could be "cured" with circumcision. Which everybody nowadays knows is an extreme misconception.^{lxxxv}

To summarize; circumcision is an issue we have here in Canada related to Rites of Passage because it is one. It is a rite of passage into our North American society. Since it is the cultural norm to have a circumcised penis, that is the way it is done. Many boys and men miss out in the opportunity to feel full sexual pleasure because they have been circumcised. Health reasons aside, circumcision is not necessary and doesn't need to be performed. It is a sad loss.

Solutions

There really are not many solutions to this issue. Rites of passage have been around since the dawn of time and they are likely to stay around for as long

^{lxxxv} Olliver, Debra S. "Circumcision in America." NOHARMM Access Page. Oct. 1998. Web. 05 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.noharrrm.org/circamerica.htm>>.

as humankind is on Earth. The only way for rites of passage to stop being an issue, would be if they stopped happening altogether, which will not happen.

The people that still go through these rites of passage go through them because it is in their heritage to do so. These people will not soon stop, unless physically forced to, because it is their culture, and loss of culture is something the world tries to avoid.

Culture is a living thing. It is formed of the symbols, meanings and behavior of people, but can live beyond the lives of those individual humans who carry it. We encourage the preservation of songs, dances and music, because they enhance the sense of identity, an important factor of capacity development. But we think that some practices and values need to change if a community is to get stronger.^{lxxxvi}

That could be a solution then, if a community gets stronger with significant changes, then getting of the rites of passage could be a good thing.

But it is still an iffy solution, because many would argue that the loss of traditions is a bad thing. Many would also say that we have already lost enough traditions in this world, and we have to try and preserve the ones we currently have still around.

^{lxxxvi} Bartle, Phil. "Preserving Culture." Community Empowerment Collective. 2007. Web. 03 Apr. 2011.

<<http://www.scn.org/cmp/modules/emp-pre.htm>>.

Conclusion

Rites of passage are a complex world issue which affects those involved largely, yet many do not even understand anything wrong is going on. Rites of passage have been around for eons, and will continue on past many generations. Since the beginning, rites of passage have been playing a key role in contributing to the creation of new cultures and traditions in many countries world-wide. The governments of the countries where these rites of passage take place have no control over what happens in the rituals. It is strictly those participating on the rituals, or those who have participated that are in charge. There are rites of passage all over the world, in probably every single country. The ones covered in this paper are not influenced by the government(s) of the countries in which the rituals are performed. In fact, on Pentecost Island, the Vanuatu land-diving experience is now a tourist trap. People go there often to see the tribes-people jump off the towers. Rites of passage have been introduced to the world, and though some still oppose it, many are fine with people making their own decisions in what they want to do to themselves and participate in. This is an important factor. The awareness of rites of passage is a good thing. The dangerous rituals will eventually fade away, and we will live in a safer world,

where men do not have to punish themselves (as they did in my case studies) to gain acceptance in their communities.

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<<http://www.malesurvivor.org/adolescent-survivors.html>>.

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